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ABSTRACT

Designed as a supplemental teaching tool for upper elementary and middle school use, this unit contains information on the circumstances under which women of various cultures lived in the United States during the colonial and revolutionary periods and presents a perspective that is seldom included in textbooks. The unit includes biographies of ten women who lived between the years 1630 and 1800. The women selected (Abigail Adams, Mary Brant, Elizabeth Freeman, Mary Katherine Goddard, Anne Hutchinson, Mary Jemison, Eliza Pinckney, Tituba, Weetamoo, and Phillis Wheatley) were limited to the area of the 13 British colonies. Some of these women were Native Americans whose ancestors had inhabited the region for hundreds of years. Some were Europeans who came to take part in the development of a new nation. Others were black women brought from Africa to work as slaves for the white settlers. The questions that follow each biography are designed to foster classroom discussion of the context in which each woman lived and her response to her situation. They also attempt to link the past with the present and encourage students to see this connection. The class activities that follow the biographies are designed to enhance understanding of the events and times being discussed. A bibliography lists additional sources of information including general information on women in history, curriculum materials, reference books, and biographies. (JB)

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WOMEN IN COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

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TO THE TEACHER . . .

This unit on Women in Colonial and Revolutionary America is designed to be a supplemental teaching tool for upper elementary and middle school use. It contains information on the circumstances under which women of various cultures lived during this period as well as individual biographies. This information provides an important perspective on the early history of our nation, one that is seldom included in textbooks. It is our hope that this perspective will add depth to the history of colonial and revolutionary times and make it more relevant to the lives of students today.

In this unit you will find biographies of ten women who lived between 1630 and 1800. The women selected were limited to the area of the thirteen British colonies. Some of these women were Native Americans whose ancestors had inhabited the region for hundreds of years. Some were European women whose families came to this land to take part in the development of a new nation. Others were Black women brought from Africa to work as slaves for the White settlers. Each woman's story is unique and provides a particular perspective on life in Colonial America. The questions that follow each biography are designed to foster classroom discussion of the context in which each woman lived and her response to her situation. They also attempt to link the past with the present and encourage students to see this connection.

The activities that follow the biographies are included to give students an opportunity to directly experience some of the events of the time. The bibliography provides resources for further reading on both the individuals and topics introduced in the unit. Also available from the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center is a 17" x 22" color poster. The cover of this curriculum unit is adapted from the poster.

It is the Center's intent to select different periods of American history and develop curriculum units to highlight women's contributions. Please contact the Center for further information on this project.

Susan Shaffer

Susan Shaffer, Director
Sex Equity Programs
Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, 1989

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WOMEN IN COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Introduction

The early history of the United States is a story of people from three continents meeting a new situation and learning from one another. The women of these cultures had much to offer each other. Native American women knew about local plants and foods such as squash, corn, potatoes and cranberries, as well as herbal medicines and dyes. European women brought metal cooking pots, sewing needles, cotton and wool clothes, and other useful items. African women brought to the colonies as slaves had agricultural knowledge suitable for warm climates, such as rice growing — knowledge which became crucial to the survival of the colonists from the chilly parts of Europe.

Although their cultures were very different, these three groups of women had much in common. In all three cultures women were the homemakers, the cooks, and the ones who raised the children. Although their religious practices may have seemed very different from each other, they shared a spiritual approach to life which influenced their thoughts and behavior. Native American women had many more personal and political rights within their community, however, than either their European or African sisters. Married European women in the colonies were not slaves, but their legal status was that of being their husbands' property and they had no legal rights of their own.

In the end, the interaction between these three cultures benefitted only the Europeans. Conflict and wars among these three groups were frequent. The inhabiting of North America by Europeans completely disrupted the lives and communities of the Indians. The slave trade had much the same effect on the Africans who were brought to North America in chains. Today the United States is still suffering from the results of these early conflicts.

Native American Women

Before having contact with Europeans, most Native American tribes supplemented agriculture with hunting and gathering. Of the many tribes of the Eastern seaboard, we know most about the Iroquois Nation, especially the Seneca, who lived in the area now called New York. The Seneca were matrilineal, which meant that ancestry was traced through the women, rather

than the men. When a daughter married, her husband moved into her community and her children became members of her mother's clan.

The agricultural work of the tribe was done by the women working together. A chief matron, elected by the women, supervised the communal work. Within each household, the older women managed the distribution of food and other goods. The Iroquois did not believe that individuals could own the land -- after all, it had been there long before any of them came to live on it. Among the Seneca, women owned the farming tools, the long houses and their furnishings, art objects, and livestock, all of which were passed down from mother to daughter. Women also had control of their children, and if marital problems developed, it was the man who left the home. Married or not, all women of the tribe had the same rights as the men.

Having control over the land and agriculture gave women a powerful position in the community of the Senecas. They held their own councils, elected the tribe's male leaders and could remove those who acted improperly or were dishonest. They also took part in war councils and decided the fate of war captives.

By the time English settlers began to arrive, there were over 12 million people living in the territory that would become the United States. They were organized as members of over 2,000 nations. At first, contact with Europeans seemed profitable for the Indians. The French and English traders were eager to purchase furs from the Indians, for which they traded cooking pots, beads and wool blankets. They also introduced the use of alcohol, which caused many problems within the Indian community.

Europeans brought many new things to the Indians of North America, most notably, disease. When Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620, European exploration had already affected many nations and tribes of Native Americans. It is estimated that as much as 75 percent of the Indian population living along the Atlantic seaboard were killed by smallpox, measles, cholera and syphilis, diseases which were brought to this country by Europeans. Because Native Americans had no natural immunities to these diseases, epidemics spread rapidly.

Unaware of the threat the English posed when English settlements were established in the early 1600's, the Indians were friendly toward their new neighbors. Indians taught them about native foods and medicine, and some of the Indian women married the settlers. These women were among the first to learn English and they were able to act as interpreters and ambassadors between the two cultures.

Friendly relations only lasted as long as both sides respected each others' customs and kept their agreements. The Indians held any promise to

be sacred and rarely broke a treaty. Unfortunately, this was not the case for the colonists. As the colonies grew, more Indian land was wanted, and it was often taken by force. The Europeans had more modern weapons, and when conflicts broke out they easily destroyed entire Indian tribes and nations.

European Women in the Colonies

Without the work of European women, colonial settlements would not have lasted long. It wasn't unusual for colonial households to consist of ten or more children, apprentices, servants and relatives. Nearly everything the family needed had to be produced within the home, usually under the wife's supervision. Women were almost always busy tending the garden and animals, grinding enough grain for johnny-cakes and bread, chopping wood for cooking, heating and laundry, making soap and candles, spinning thread and yarn, and weaving fabric for clothes and blankets.

The division of labor in most colonial families was clear-cut. The men were responsible for hunting and farming. If the family had a business, it was usually the men's responsibility, although the women of the family often helped out. Women were responsible for maintaining the house and garden, providing meals and clothing for the family, and seeing to it that the family was supplied with all the things it needed on a daily basis. Women also nursed family members when they were sick and taught the children the various skills they would need as adults. Women often helped the men in the fields when extra hands were needed, but the men rarely helped with what was called in those days "women's work."

Hand spindle

The early colonies had as many as six men to every woman. Single women who were very poor in England were brought to the colonies, with their consent, to be sold as wives in exchange for the cost of their passage. Some women were sent to the colonies as punishment for crimes as small as stealing a loaf of bread. Many young women came as indentured servants and were required to work from four to seven years to repay the cost of their passage. Women who did not marry usually lived in the household of a male relative and worked with his wife doing household chores.

People often died young because of the harsh life of the early colonies. Widows and widowers often remarried quickly. To have been married more than once was not unusual at all. Widows were entitled to one-third of their husband's property by law. Those who didn't remarry sometimes were able to take over the family business or farm, but others had to find new ways to support themselves.

Only single women and widows were allowed to own property, sign contracts or keep money that they earned for themselves. Married women didn't have these rights. In fact, married women had no legal rights of any kind under colonial laws. Divorce was rarely allowed, so the only recourse most married women had if their husbands abused them was to run away. Newspapers carried many advertisements from husbands wanting their runaway wives returned. In fact, there were often as many advertisements for runaway wives as there were for runaway slaves.

African Women in the Colonies

At first, Africans were brought to the colonies as indentured servants, but by the late 1600's, the colonies had passed laws that made the Africans and their children slaves for life. Because they had come from many different communities in West Africa, they spoke different languages and had different customs. In the southern colonies, slave communities developed which blended the various African languages and traditions with those of their White owners.

One thing all Africans had in common with each other was the belief in the importance of their families. Blacks who had been forced to leave their homelands and families had a difficult time establishing new families in America for many reasons. Many more males were imported than females, so in most slave communities there was a shortage of available women. Marriage between slaves was outlawed in most of the southern colonies. Even if they were married, husbands and wives were often separated by their owners. Parents could not protect their children from the owners' mistreatment, and children were often sold away from their parents. Women were sometimes abused by their owners or forced to have children to increase the slaveholder's wealth. Records from this time show that the African slaves often fought back, risking violent beatings and sometimes torture and death in their attempts to take care of each other or find members of their families who had been sold.

On the big plantations of the southern colonies, slaves often lived in separate communities. Women were expected to do the same heavy labor on the tobacco and cotton plantations as the men, as well as to care for their babies. Aunts, uncles, cousins and unrelated adults took care of children left behind when their parents were sold away. White owners were required to provide for their slaves, but only enough to keep them alive and working. The slaves usually received only a meager ration of food, one blanket, and a small piece of cloth to use as clothing. Some colonial legislatures outlawed education and religious practices for Blacks to keep them more dependent on their White owners and to discourage rebellions. In some states, slaves comprised more than half of the population. The greater their numbers, the more tension there was between slaves and their owners.

In the northern colonies there were fewer slaves, and their living conditions were very different than in the South. Typically, northern slaves worked alone or with one or two others, and usually ate, slept and worked in their slaveholder's house. While they may have lived in better physical conditions than slaves in the South, they lived in isolation from other Blacks. Unlike their southern counterparts, they lived without a community of their own people.

Conclusion

Although there are similarities between the lives of Native American, African and European women in North America during the 17th and 18th centuries, these are outnumbered by their differences. Relationships which may have begun in a fairly friendly manner between the three groups did not stay that way for long. It was the European ways that dominated the others in the end: Africans and Indians either took them on willingly or were forced to accept the changes. Europeans were so sure their culture was superior that they missed the opportunity to learn from the African and Indian cultures. By the time of the American Revolution, the patterns had been set for the conflicts and turmoil which would be a part of the interactions between these three groups in the future.

It is hard to find information about individual women of this time. Most of what we know is from diaries or letters which have been found by historians. Since most women in this time period weren't taught to read or write, many of the stories we have about women's lives were written by other people. We have no way of knowing if these stories are accurate or not. Accounts of Indian and African women's lives were usually written from the point of view of European men, who were not very likely to see things in the same light as the women they were writing about.

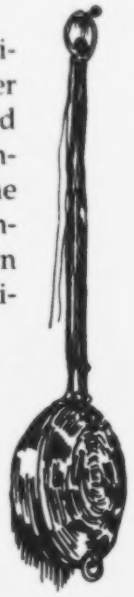
The individuals whose stories follow are, in many ways, exceptions to the rule for women of their time period and cultural group. Many were highly educated in a time when most women had no schooling at all. The Native American women featured had a great deal of contact with the English, more so than the majority of their sisters. But the stories of these women give us an idea of what life was like in a very dramatic and personal way. It is a different view into our nation's history; it is women's history.

ABIGAIL ADAMS:
Republican Mother

In some ways, Abigail Adams (1744-1818) was brought up as a typical female in Colonial America. Her mother taught her how to run a household, do embroidery, and behave properly in society. Of European ancestry, she was raised to believe that a woman's place was in the home. Her father was a minister and looked after her religious training. She did not go to school; she was taught to read and write by her grandparents. She spent many hours of her childhood reading the books in her father's and grandfather's libraries.

Abigail's education made her different from other girls of her time. By the time she was a teenager, she knew a great deal about many subjects. She had developed strong opinions and was not shy about sharing her ideas with other people. When she met John Adams, they turned out to be two of a kind. Both were intelligent, and both enjoyed discussing politics and the many other topics that interested them. They were married in 1764, when Abigail was twenty years old.

John was a lawyer and later became a delegate to the Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia. There, he and other colonial leaders discussed the political ideas which eventually led to the Declaration of Independence and the birth of a new country. This kept him away from home for most of the year. While he was gone Abigail was in charge of the family farm. Under her management, the farm was so successful that John didn't have to earn money for the family and could participate in the second Continental Congress as well.



Warming pan

Before the Revolutionary War, English policies outraged the colonists. To protest, the colonists started a boycott of British-made goods: sugar, tea, cotton cloth, and other items. This meant that, in addition to managing the regular business of the farm, Abigail had to produce additional supplies for her family and spin and weave cloth for their clothing. They had to do without many imported staples altogether.

As a typical colonial mother, Abigail was also responsible for educating her four children. She took this task very seriously and regretted that she had not had more formal training herself. She felt it was important for mothers to raise their children, both boys and girls, to be good citizens, if the new democratic nation were to survive. In order

to do this, it was obvious to her that mothers needed to be educated and informed about social and political affairs. She was a strong advocate of education for girls throughout her life, a position which was not shared by most other people at that time. She was also in favor of married women having more rights within the marriage relationship, another idea which was ahead of its time.

All the time John was a delegate to the Continental Congress, he and Abigail wrote many letters to each other. John kept her informed about the political issues being discussed, and Abigail sent back her ideas and opinions. One letter she wrote to John in March of 1776 is often quoted. In it she said:

> . . . in the new code of law which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire that you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

Typically for a man of the time, John answered her:

> As to your extraordinary code of laws, I cannot but laugh . . . Depend upon it, we know better than to repeal our masculine systems . . .

During the Revolution, John was sent to France as a trade representative of the new country. He took his oldest son, John Quincy, with him. They were away from the rest of the family for six years. Abigail continued managing the family farm and also started a small import business selling items bought in Europe by John. In 1783, Abigail and the rest of the family joined them in France. It was the first time she had been more than 40 miles away from home. They settled into a house on the outskirts of Paris, and she started learning about France. When John was appointed Ambassador to England, the family went with him again. After two years there, they decided it was time to go home.

It wasn't until 1789 that the Constitution was ratified and elections were held. John Adams was chosen Vice President under President George Washington, and eight years later he was elected President. Abigail took her role as First Lady very seriously. For example, she had $25,000 a year to pay for servants, transportation, furnishings, entertaining and everything else the President needed for his position and home. All her skills in managing, which she had developed when she was in charge of her import business and their farm, came in very handy.

Abigail loved being First Lady because it put her right in the center of government. John had always discussed political issues and concerns with her, and she surely had a great deal of influence on his decision-making. She was also on friendly terms with many congressmen and probably influenced them as well. She had always been an active letter writer, and she continued to keep in touch with people she couldn't talk with in person.

After John's term as President, they returned to their home in Braintree, Massachusetts. It turned out that she had educated her children very effectively. Her oldest son, John Quincy, became a senator, Ambassador to Russia, Secretary of State, and finally President of the United States. She had taught him more than simply how to read and write. In fact, she is one of the people most influential in the development of the idea of "Republican Motherhood," which refers to the belief at the time that mothers should bring up children to be educated, politically aware, self-sufficient and good citizens. Such citizens were very important if this country's experiment with democracy was to be successful.

Discussion Questions:

1. How was Abigail similar to other women in her time period? How was she different?
2. Why was it important for Abigail to learn how to run a household? How does running a household in colonial times differ from running a household today?
3. How did Abigail participate in politics?
4. Why did she think it was important for girls to have an education? Are these reasons important today? Why or why not?
5. How did Abigail's success in managing money affairs affect her family?
6. What were the duties of the First Lady during colonial times? How have they changed?
7. What does "Republican Motherhood" mean?
8. What was Abigail trying to tell John in her famous "Remember the Ladies" letter? Why do you think he responded as he did?

MARY BRANT:
Cultural Ambassador

Her name at birth was not Mary Brant, but Deyonwandonti (1736-1796). She was the daughter of a sachem or religious leader of the Mohawk tribe, which belonged to the Iroquois Confederacy. Born about 1736 in what is now the state of New York, she came to play an important role in relationships between the Iroquois Nation and the British.

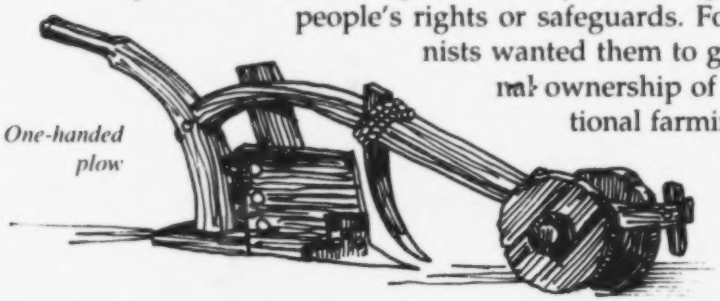
Among the British officials in North America there were some who were fair-minded, who fought for Indian rights, and whom the Indians could trust. The most outstanding of these was Sir William Johnson, British Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He was one of the most respected and richest men in the colonies. He felt it was important to become familiar with Indian culture and values, and he always kept his promises. When his first wife died, he married Deyonwandonti in an Indian ceremony. She then became known to the colonists as Mary Brant.

It is said that Mary first attracted William's attention when she vaulted onto the back of a galloping horse and landed behind an English officer. He was impressed. Indian women were strong and independent, free in their dress and activities. They were equal to men, went where they chose, and married whom they liked. After Mary and William were married, they lived in his mansion in the British style, a very elegant lifestyle for a frontier community. They had nine children, who were sent to English schools in Johnstown. Mary was a great asset to her husband because of her prestige among her own people and her beauty and grace as hostess of his estate. She was an interpreter, cultural ambassador, and peacemaker between the English and the Indians. In two wars, she influenced the Iroquois to side with the English.

Mary and her brother Thayendanegea, who was also known as Joseph Brant, distinguished themselves in service to the English during the Revolutionary War. Mary was able to provide important information on American rebel troop movements to the English army and to give food and supplies to soldiers who had taken refuge in the woods. When her land was taken by rebel forces, she was sent to the English base in Niagara. There she used her influence to keep the Cayuga and Seneca Indians on the English side. After the war, she and many other Loyalists went to live in Canada. She was compensated for the loss of her land by the state of New York and received a pension from England for her "zealous services" during the war.

Overall, the decision to support the English proved disastrous for the Iroquois. In the early years of the war they were successful in battle against the colonies, but the tide turned in 1779, and the Indians suffered heavy losses. A smallpox epidemic broke out during the war, and without any natural immunity, Indians died by the thousands. Continental soldiers burned their villages, destroyed their crops and drove them from their homes. Even though they held no right to it, at the war's end the English gave all of the Indians' land that lay east of the Mississippi River to the new American nation.

Once again, the Iroquois were forced to move from their land and were pressured to take up White ways of living, but without White people's rights or safeguards. For example, the colonists wanted them to give up their communal ownership of land and their traditional farming practices in which the women of the tribe were in charge of agricultural production.



One-handed plow

The women were to become housewives rather than farmers, and the men were to give up hunting and take up the plow instead. This would result in a considerable loss of status and power for the women and a major change in activity for the men. They were pressured by missionaries and offered farming supplies by the government. Although few of the Iroquois were willing to give up their traditional ways, their lands and power were gone, the result of betrayal by their English allies and the greed of the colonists.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Iroquois support the English during the Revolutionary War? What happened to the Iroquois because of the war?
2. What role did Mary play in the Iroquois decision about which side to support in the war?
3. After she married William Johnson, how did Mary Brant live?
4. Compare the way Mary Brant acted with the way that most European colonial women acted. How were they different? How were they the same? What are some possible reasons for the differences?
5. What specifically did Mary do during the war?

Discussion Questions *(continued)*

6. What happened to her after the war? What generally happens to people who support the side that loses?
7. What skills did Mary Brant have that made her a good ambassador? Are these skills which political ambassadors need today? Explain.
8. What changes did the government and the missionaries want the Iroquois to make?

ELIZABETH FREEMAN (Mum Bett): Free and Equal

In August of 1781, while the Revolutionary War was still going on, an African slave won her freedom through the courts of Massachusetts. It was the first time any Black person had dared to try this. Elizabeth Freeman (1742-1829) had a logical mind and was an independent thinker. She knew that the words of the state's constitution said that all were born "free and equal," and she was certain that included her.

When she was only six months old, Elizabeth was bought by a wealthy man named Colonel John Ashley. As she grew up, she was one of his most trusted slaves and was often asked to serve his most important guests. Elizabeth was in the room when the leaders of the Massachusetts colony met to draft the new state constitution. She felt her spine tingle when she overheard the words that were being written into the constitution: "All men are created free and equal." Surely those words included her, she thought, and they were going to be the supreme law of Massachusetts.

The Revolutionary War was still raging and so was the idea of freedom. The colonists were determined to be free, no matter what the cost. Elizabeth's husband had already paid the price: he had died fighting in the war. If slaves and Black people everywhere were not to be free also, then his death would have been for nothing.

Pot hooks

After the state constitution was approved, Elizabeth waited eagerly for someone to tell her she was free. No one did. More weeks passed. Then one day there was a violent incident with Mrs. Ashley. Elizabeth was struck on the arm by her mistress with a heated kitchen shovel while she was trying to protect her sister from being hit. She decided not to wait any longer. Elizabeth took her baby in her arms and walked four miles to see Thomas Sedgwick, a lawyer she had met at the Ashley house. She trudged through the mud and rain, uncertain of how he would receive her. Much to her relief, Sedgwick greeted her warmly. She then told him what had happened and that she wanted to be free. He was startled by what she had to say about the new constitution and freedom. It had simply never occurred to him that slaves might be included under the new laws. He did not have an immediate answer for her, but said he would give her questions some thought.

Their meeting was cut short when a furious Colonel Ashley showed up to take Elizabeth back to his house. Her eyes begged Thomas Sedgwick to protect her, but there was nothing he could do. She was a slave and had to obey. Her situation surely seemed hopeless as she rode away with the Colonel. Thomas Sedgwick was her master's friend. She had no money to offer him for his services. Would he take her case? Would she be punished for asking him?

Two weeks later, the sheriff came to the Ashley's home with a court order to remove her. Elizabeth must have held her breath with hope. The Colonel flatly refused to let her go without being compensated for the loss of his property, which was his legal right at the time, since all slaves were the property of their masters. The sheriff climbed back on his horse and rode off again, leaving Elizabeth in despair.

The sheriff returned within a few days, bringing another court order and the compensation for Colonel Ashley. This meant that the court was willing to listen to her case if she had the courage to go through with it. Colonel Ashley commanded her not to leave. She knew that many people were homeless, starving, and without jobs because of the war and that the hardships were especially severe for Black people. At the Ashleys, she at least had food, clothing, warm shelter — everything, in fact, except freedom. She had never disobeyed her master's orders before, but now she turned to Colonel Ashley, took a breath and said, "I want to be free."

While she waited for her case to be brought to court, Elizabeth worked for the Sedgwicks, quickly bringing order to their disorganized household. She organized all the servants into an efficient team, and soon the china and brass had a new shine and the house itself was spotless. The children adored her and affectionately nicknamed her "Mum Bett." The Sedgwick household was clearly the better for her calm efficiency and attention.

At last, on an August day in 1781, Elizabeth's case came to trial. Thomas Sedgwick represented her. At first he was not very hopeful, but she never faltered in her belief that "All men are created free and equal" should include women and slaves, too.

To the astonishment of many people, the court agreed with Elizabeth's interpretation of the new constitution. Elizabeth received her back wages from Colonel Ashley and money to pay her court costs. Most importantly, she was free! At this time, she chose to use Mum Bett as her official name.

In the years that followed, she continued to live with the Sedgwicks. She was their paid housekeeper and a respected member of the household. Her intelligence and household management skills enabled Thomas Sedgwick to devote all of his time to his profession. The Freeman case had brought him a great deal of notoriety and he became a successful attorney.

He always attributed part of his success and the happiness of his family to Elizabeth's good care. Thomas Sedgewick in his writings speaks of Mum Bett and says, "I cannot believe in the moral and physical inferiority of the race to which she belonged. The degradation of the African must have been otherwise caused than by natural inferiority."

Discussion Questions

1. When the men who were writing the Massachusetts state constitution said "All men are created free and equal," did they mean to include women and slaves too? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think the men writing the Massachusetts' constitution didn't realize that "all men" should include slaves as well as women?
3. How did Elizabeth feel when she heard these words?
4. How would you react if someone tried to hurt your brother or sister?
5. Why was Thomas Sedgwick surprised that Elizabeth wanted freedom?
6. Why do you suppose Thomas Sedgwick was willing to take Elizabeth's case?
7. What arguments would you make if you were Thomas Sedgwick, defending Elizabeth's right to freedom under the new constitution?
8. Given the nature of the time in which she lived, what were the advantages and disadvantages of freedom for someone like Elizabeth Freeman?
9. As you read the story, which of Elizabeth's actions took the most courage? Do you think people show that kind of courage today? Give examples.

MARY KATHERINE GODDARD: Publisher of the Revolution

Mary Katherine Goddard (1738-1816) was an unusual European colonial woman. She chose not to marry so that she could have a career and be independent. She felt a great deal of pressure from her family and friends because of this decision, but Mary had a mind of her own. If she were to wed, she would lose her legal rights and her economic freedom. She knew that her work was making a contribution to the nation. This was very important to her.

Mary was born in Connecticut in 1738. Her father was a doctor and postmaster of the town where they lived. This was a very important job because the mail was the only way people could communicate with each other in those days. After her father died, her brother, William, started a print shop in Rhode Island. Mary and her mother, Sarah, went to live with him there.

Adjustable candle holder

Both Mary and Sarah worked in the print shop where they published a newspaper, the *Providence Gazette*. William then moved to Philadelphia to open another print shop, and in 1768, Mary joined him there, helping him publish the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. Five years later, William moved again, this time to Baltimore. There he started a third newspaper and print shop, the first in Maryland.

Mary stayed in Philadelphia for a while, managing the *Chronicle*, which was now one of the largest papers in all the colonies. But the relationship between the colonies and England was growing more and more tense. William realized that when the colonies became independent they would need their own postal system. Mary closed the Philadelphia business and moved to Baltimore to take over the newspaper there while William developed plans for the new postal system.

On May 10, 1775, Mary Katherine Goddard was officially named publisher of the *Maryland Journal*. She was known to be a steady, objective publisher who could be trusted to print both sides of any story rather than just her personal perspective, which was the general practice of the time. During the Revolutionary War, she reported firsthand accounts of battles in progress. She had such a strong reputation in the colonies that when Congress fled to Baltimore in 1776, Mary was trusted with publishing the first copies of the Declaration of Independence, including the names of the

signers. Risking imprisonment, she included her own name as printer. Later she was the first to print the news of the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty in 1783, which ended the Revolutionary War.

Mary and her brother were the first newspaper publishers to be taken to court to get them to reveal their sources. They had published a letter to the editor which seemed to support the British. The rebels of the town were very upset. Men from the Whig Club tore apart the print shop and threatened William if he would not tell them who wrote the letter. He refused. When the case came before the Maryland Assembly, it was decided that the American press had the right to protect its sources of information, a principle we still uphold today.

When the new postal system was established, Mary was appointed Postmaster General of Baltimore. She held that position for 14 years, but in 1789 it was taken away from her. Some people thought it was more suitable for a man to be postmaster. Mary was very angry, and even though over 200 of the city's prominent leaders signed a petition in her favor, she lost the position.

From then until she retired at the age of 72, Mary ran a bookstore in Baltimore. She died six years later, having been a leader of her community, publisher of three weekly newspapers, and a postmaster.

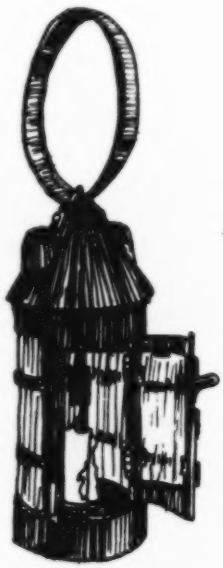
Discussion Questions

1. Why did almost all European colonial women marry?
   Why did Mary Katherine Goddard choose to remain single?
2. How did Mary learn to run a print shop?
3. Why was the postmaster an important position in the colonies?
4. What skills or attitudes did Mary Katherine Goddard have that made her a good choice as publisher of the Declaration of Independence? Are these same skills necessary for publishing today? Explain.
5. What was the controversy which took Mary and her brother to court? Why is this issue still important today?
6. Why did she have to give up her position as Postmaster General of Baltimore? How do you think she must have felt?
7. Why do some people still believe today that women should not hold certain jobs? How do you think women who want those jobs feel?
8. Why is the right to protect confidential press sources important? What are the arguments against protecting confidential press sources?

ANNE HUTCHINSON:
Religious Rebel

Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) brought her family from England to live in the Massachusetts Bay Colony just four years after its founding in 1630. She had been a devoted follower of Reverend John Cotton, who had established a colony of Calvinists after being forced to leave England. Far from seeking religious freedom, the Puritans came to the "New World" to establish a place where they could practice and enforce their strict Calvinist teachings. Hutchinson came to play a major role in a serious religious debate in the early colony.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony was a religious community where there was no separation of church and state. The leaders of the church were in complete control of everything: religion, law and politics. Their interpretation of the Bible was the only one allowed.



Lantern

Anne Hutchinson was a practiced healer and midwife, the mother of twelve children, self-educated and well respected in the community. Her religious beliefs were strong and fervent. Like many other women in the community, she began inviting friends to her home during the week to discuss the sermon they had heard in church the previous Sunday. Anne went one step further when she dared to interpret biblical teachings herself and to criticize the narrow perspectives and beliefs of the church officials. That was when the trouble began.

Theological questions were taken very seriously in the colony at that time. The common belief was that good works, such as following the Bible and the Ten Commandments, were the only way to salvation. This belief, called the "Covenant of Works," required people to follow official church teachings and laws to the letter. It also required everyone to be absolutely loyal to the church officials themselves. Anne, on the other hand, believed in the "Covenant of Grace," which held that a person could be saved only by feeling God's grace within and by obeying God rather than the Church. This was a far more personal connection to God.

Today we might see this as a minor difference in religious thinking, but at the time it turned into a fight that threatened the entire community. More

and more people began attending Anne's meetings, and her followers grew more loyal to her than to the church. The church officials were simply furious! The split in the community became almost violent at times. Hutchinson and her followers lost the struggle when John Winthrop, her arch rival, was elected governor and took command of the colony.

On March 15, 1638, Hutchinson was brought to trial on charges of heresy against the church. Even John Cotton, the teacher she had so admired and followed, turned against her. He told other women in the community not to listen to her, ". . . for you see she is but a woman and many unsound and dangerous principles are held by her." The trial ended with Hutchinson being forced to leave the church and the colony. She and her family were joined by many of her followers in Rhode Island where they began the colony of Portsmouth.

The persecution and trial of Anne Hutchinson was an important historical event because it was one of the first attempts by anyone in the colonies to stand up to the strict doctrines of the church. She struck a blow for true religious freedom and, ultimately, for the separation of church and state. While some argue that she held her beliefs as firmly as the Puritan fathers held theirs and was not truly in favor of religious freedom, the right to dissent was advanced by her actions. Freedom of religion and the separation of religious matters from the laws of government have since become basic principles of American life.

Discussion Questions

1. One of the founding ideas of American democracy is the idea of separation of church and state. What does this mean? Why is it important?
2. Why did Anne Hutchinson go to the Massachusetts Bay Colony?
3. What was different about the meetings she held in her home compared with those held by other women?
4. Why did church officials bring her to trial? What happened as a result of her trial?
5. Explain the difference between the religious teachings of the Puritan church and those taught by Anne.
6. Was Anne Hutchinson expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony because she was a woman? Would a man have been expelled for doing what she did? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions *(continued)*

7. Why is the trial of Anne Hutchinson considered important by historians?

8. Why was it important for everyone in the Massachusetts Bay Colony to have the same ideas about God and authority? What positive things can happen when everyone believes the same things? What negative things can happen?

MARY JEMISON:
Life Among the Seneca

When the Native Americans of the Iroquois Confederacy took captives in war, instead of killing them they often adopted them to replace tribal members they had lost in battle. Originally, these captives were the women and children of other Indian nations, but once Europeans and Africans began arriving in North America, the practice was expanded to include them as well. Children taken in conflict with the settlers were raised as Indians and treated with the same love and respect as the Indian children. Captive women often married into the tribe and lived within it for many years.

The European colonists usually attempted to rescue or ransom such captives and return them back to their communities. But the "rescued" ones did not always want to go back to living in the colonial style. In 1753, Benjamin Franklin wrote: "When White persons of either sex have been taken prisoners young by the Indians and lived a while among them, tho' ransomed by their friends, and treated with all imaginable tenderness to prevail them to stay among the English, yet in short time they become disgusted with our manner of life, and the care and pains that are necessary to support it, and take the first good opportunity of escaping again to the woods, from whence there is no reclaiming them."

Some of these European "captives" wrote about their experiences among the Indians. It is from them that we have the best accounts of what Indian life was like. Mary Rowlandson, who was taken captive and held against her will, wrote one such story, and Mary Jemison, who chose to stay with the Iroquois her entire life, wrote another. This is the story of Mary Jemison (1743-1833).

Mary was born aboard a ship headed from Ireland to Pennsylvania. When she was only 14, her settlement was raided during the French and Indian War, and she was taken captive by the Shawnee. She was then adopted by a Seneca family and taken to their home on the Ohio River. The Seneca deeply loved and cared for their children, and Mary soon stopped thinking of herself as a captive at all. She was a Seneca now. In 1760, she married a Delaware Indian named Sheninjee and they had two children. A few years later, she traveled with her Seneca family back to their traditional homeland in western New York and settled in the Genesee Valley. Unfortunately, her husband died before he could join her there.

As a Seneca woman, Mary worked the communal fields with the other women. They planted, cultivated and gathered crops, tended the cattle,

ground corn, cooked food and raised their children. In the book she later wrote about her life, she described these activities in detail. She liked the communal approach to tending the fields, as each woman worked the same amount, doing the same kind of work. Working together made the tasks more enjoyable, and there was never jealousy or hunger simply because one person's harvest was better than another's. Women had a higher status among the Seneca than they did in colonial America, a fact that Mary Jemison clearly appreciated. As a widow, however, Mary had less advantages in this system, but she soon remarried. Her second husband was a great warrior named Kiokatoo. She had six more children with him.

During the Revolutionary War, the Seneca sided with the English. Their camp was attacked and destroyed by American rebel troops and they were forced to move. After the war, Mary was offered the chance to return to European society, but she refused. She was happy with the life she was leading and did not think her mixed-blood children would be accepted.

Under the Big Tree Treaty of 1797, she was granted 18,000 acres in the Genesee Valley, where she lived out the remainder of her long life. Although she lived in a log cabin, she continued to live in the Indian fashion. She slept and ate on the ground and tended her large herd of cattle and her crops until she was well into her eighties. She owned so much land that she leased much of it to European tenant farmers and Indians.

She became somewhat of a local celebrity in the Genesee Valley, which was just beginning to be settled. She was cheerful, generous and hospitable to everyone. She told stories to eager audiences of Indian life and the changes that occurred as a result of their contact with the Europeans. When she was quite old, she told her life story to a friend who wrote it down and published it as a book. This book, A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison, was first published in 1824 and was reissued over 30 times during the next 100 years. In fact, it was one of the most popular books of its time about Indian life.

Mary Jemison lived to be ninety years old. A few years before her death, she sold her land and moved to the Buffalo Creek Reservation near Buffalo, New York. She had reclaimed her U.S. citizenship several years earlier and shortly before her death she also reconverted to Christianity. A statue to her was erected in Genesee in 1910 as a tribute to all the women who helped pioneer western New York.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Mary Jemison come to live with the Seneca Indians?
2. Why did she choose to stay with the Seneca rather than return to White colonial society? What would you have chosen to do?
3. What were some of the things she did as a typical Native American woman?
4. What facts about Indian life did you learn from Mary Jemison's story that you did not know before?
5. Which side did her nation support during the Revolutionary War and what happened to her people?
6. What did Mary do after the war?
7. What important information do we have today because of Mary Jemison?
8. Compare the life of Seneca women as described by Mary Jemison's story with the life of European colonial women. How were they different? How were they the same? Explain.

ELIZA PINCKNEY:
Manager, Businesswoman

Much is known about Eliza Pinckney (1722-1793) because of the hundreds of letters she wrote to her family, friends and business associates. The copies she kept of these letters show her to have been a well-educated woman with tremendous energy and an active interest in many things, from experimenting with new crops to playing the harpsichord.

Eliza's father, George Lucas, was a major in the British Army who was stationed in the West Indies. She was born there in 1722, but spent most of her youth in boarding schools in England. When she was 15, she moved to the family plantation in South Carolina with her parents and younger sister, while her two younger brothers stayed in school in England. Two years later, colonial affairs in the West Indies needed her father's attention and he was called back there. Mrs. Lucas was ill and unable to do much, and Eliza was put in charge of caring for her family and the property. At the age of 17, Eliza took over the management not only of the 600-acre plantation where they lived, but also of two larger plantations nearby, which had belonged to her grandfather.

Churn

Her responsibilities were tremendous, yet her letters show that she was happy. She adored her father and felt it was her duty to run his business. Besides, she loved doing it. In 1740, she wrote this to her former guardian in England: "I have the business of three plantations to transact which requires much writing, and more business and fatigue of other sorts than you can imagine, but lest you should imagine it too burdensome to a girl of my early time of life, give me leave to assure you, I think myself happy that I can be so useful to so good a father."

She wasn't satisfied with simply running her family's affairs either: she wanted to increase profits. Under her father's instruction, she experimented with new crops. She tried fruit orchards, oak groves (to provide wood for ship building) and fig gardens as well as the usual southern staples of rice, pork, pitch and tar. After much experimentation, she managed to start producing indigo, a popular blue dye. Within three years, she was selling the seeds to other planters. By doing this, she helped create a new cash crop for the whole region, profits for her family, and considerable prestige for herself.

Not all of Eliza's time was spent supervising plantation matters. In another letter she wrote: "I rise at five o'clock in the morning, read till seven, then take a walk in the garden or fields, see that servants are at their respective business . . . The first hour after breakfast is spent at music, the next is constantly employed in recollecting something I have learned, such as French or shorthand." She also spent time tutoring her younger sister, Polly, along with two Black girls she hoped to train as teachers for other slave children. She wrote: "I devote the rest of the time . . . to our little Polly and two black girls who I teach to read, and if I have my papa's approbation (my Mama's I have got) I intend [them] for school mistress's for the rest of the Negroe children -- another scheme you see." This method of Black children teaching other Black children was very advanced for this time. The rest of the day was spent reading (she ordered books from England), sewing, visiting friends on other plantations, and writing letters.

Many of her letters were to her younger brothers at school in England. Others were to their teachers, checking on their education and their behavior. Eliza considered self-control, moderation and logical thinking to be the keys to successful living. She followed this philosophy herself and taught it to her brothers and later to her own two sons.

When Eliza was 22, her father decided to move the family back to the West Indies. Eliza wanted to stay in South Carolina, so she married her close friend, Charles Pinckney, whose wife had recently died. He was much older than she, but he was well-educated, a successful lawyer and a landowner. He had seven plantations, some of them huge, and a beautiful house on the Charleston waterfront.

Eliza's marriage was a very happy one for fourteen years. Then, in 1758, Charles died of malaria, leaving Eliza a widow at age 36, with small children and an enormous estate to supervise. Before Charles' death, the family had lived in England for five years, and the hired managers had done a very poor job of maintaining the property. Eliza must have felt dismayed, as well as challenged, when she returned to take over management of the property again.

A proper education for her children was very important to Eliza and because the schools in England were far better than those in the colonies, she decided to keep her two sons in boarding school. The separation from them was almost more than she could stand. She didn't see them again for 16 years, but she kept in close communication through her letters. As she had done for her brothers before, she constantly wrote about how they should set a moral example for others and always be a credit to the family name and reputation.

By the time the Revolutionary War began, both her sons had returned home and pledged themselves to the colonies. Eliza became a loyal patriot herself, despite her many business dealings and friends in England. The war caused considerable damage and losses to her property in South Carolina and ruined much of her overseas business. Her sons survived the battles, though, and she considered her sacrifice none too great for the cause of the new republic.

Her sons grew up to be just the sort of men she had hoped they would be, and they were the pride of her life. Both served as generals during the war, and both signed the new U.S. Constitution. The oldest son, Charles Coatesworth, was active in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and Thomas, the younger son, became governor of South Carolina. In 1791, President George Washington made the long and difficult trip to the Pinckney estate to visit Eliza and commend her for the great accomplishments of her family. By carefully raising her sons with republican principles, she had made a great contribution to the young nation and had, herself, embodied the spirit of "Republican Motherhood," southern style.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Eliza come to be in charge of the Lucas plantations? What did she do to make them especially successful?
2. What opportunities did Eliza Pinckney have that most women who lived during colonial times did not have?
3. What did she teach her younger brothers and her sons, and why did she think it was important?
4. Eliza taught Black children how to read against her father's wishes. Why would people in Colonial times disapprove of this action?
5. What price did Eliza pay for her support of the Revolutionary War?
6. What became of her sons?
7. What did you admire most about the things Eliza Pinckney did with her life?
8. What did Eliza Pinckney do that caused people to praise her as a mother? Do mothers receive praise for doing the same kinds of things today? Why or why not?
9. Why do we know so much about Eliza Pinckney's life?
10. Why do we know more about the lives of European colonists and "exceptional" slaves than we do about the experiences of most slaves?

TITUBA:
Skills or Witchcraft?

Tituba (1660- ?) was a Black woman who came to play a major role in a curious chapter of American history, the Salem Witch Trials. In the late 1600's, the village of Salem, Massachusetts, was a Puritan community where there was little separation between religious and civil authority. Cultural differences or unusual social behavior were not easily tolerated. Superstition and mass hysteria caused a major social crisis which resulted in the witchcraft trials of 1692.

Tituba was born a slave in 1660 on the island of Barbados in the West Indies. At the age of 14, she was sold to Susanna Endicott, who was a lenient mistress. When Endicott was widowed five years later, she inherited her husband's estate. She agreed to buy Tituba's sweetheart, John, so that he and Tituba could be married, and for the next ten years they lived in Barbados.

The island was a beautiful place to live. The weather was warm and the cool trade winds blew all the time. Susanna Endicott was a wealthy and fun-loving person who gave many parties. Tituba and John worked hard, but they had time to themselves and were able to enjoy the warm ocean nearby. They would have continued to live that way if Endicott hadn't been so lavish with her parties and gambling. She eventually lost her fortune and had to sell her slaves to pay her debts.

Tituba and John were sold to the Reverend Samuel Parris, a stern Puritan pastor who was passing through Barbados on his way to Boston looking for work. Parris' wife was in poor health and they had a young daughter and a niece living with them who needed care and guidance. Rev. Parris needed the help of these two healthy, intelligent, energetic people to manage his household and take care of his family.

What a different place Boston was from Barbados! It was cold and crowded, and the people were so different, but Tituba found many new things to learn there. She was hired out to a weaver who taught her to spin and weave beautifully. Then she became friendly with a woman healer who taught her about many local herbs and home remedies and how to use them to cure various diseases. Soon Tituba was using these skills to care for the Rev. Parris' wife and to earn money to support the family while the Rev. Parris was looking for a job.

Eventually, Parris was hired by the church in the little village of Salem, just outside of Boston. John was hired out to work for the village tavern

keeper. Tituba tended the garden, fed the animals, cleaned the house, cooked, and cared for the needs of the family. Since she had grown up in a tropical environment, Tituba felt close to nature and was very much at ease with the animals she cared for. She was a diligent worker and gave careful attention to the garden and orchards and kept a clean house. The Parris' small farm became prosperous, which made some of their neighbors jealous. Some of the local women developed suspicions about Tituba's unusual spinning and weaving skill and her effective use of herbs for healing. Her black skin added to their discomfort. The Parris family had not been in Salem very long when the trouble began.

Spinning wheel

The Puritan religion was very stern. It saw life as a constant struggle between God and the devil. Anything outside the rigid rules and customs of the community was not allowed. Anyone who was not clearly a practicing Christian might be accused of being a witch, especially if that person seemed different in other ways. Because she was Black, more talented at spinning and healing than most, and from a different culture as well, Tituba attracted much attention.

Parris' niece, Abigail, who was 11, and his 9-year-old daughter Betty, made matters worse. With several of the servant girls of neighboring families, they got Tituba to tell fortunes by reading cards, a skill she had learned for her former mistress' amusement. In addition, the girls believed Tituba had some psychic abilities. There wasn't much in the way of amusement in this small village, and soon the girls became caught up with stories of witchcraft they had heard in church sermons and in the tavern. One by one they started having strange fits. "It was a witch that caused it!" they screamed. The adults in the town believed them, and everyone started feeling even more anxious. Whenever anything unusual happened in the village — a cow dried up or someone developed a fever — people were sure a witch was causing it. But who was she?

Tituba, along with an old woman and a homeless beggar, were the first to be accused. They were taken to court and charged with casting a spell on the young girls and causing every misfortune in the village. The fact that Tituba's garden was so prosperous and her animals were so healthy, while other farms were not, was used against her. So were her spinning and herbal skills.

Although all three initially denied the charges, they were beaten, forced to confess, and sent to jail in Boston. Tituba attributed her confession of witchery to the fact that "her master did beat her and otherwise abuse her, to make her confess and accuse her Sister-Witches . . ." The young girls stepped up their hysterics; they screamed and fainted and had visions and nightmares. Soon nearly everyone in the village was accusing everyone else. Over fifty people ended up in jail, some for over a year, until the trials were ordered stopped by the governor of the colony. By that time, nineteen people had been hanged and one had been pressed to death with stones for the crime of witchcraft. Others had died from the foul conditions of the jail itself.

All those who had been held in jail were pardoned in May of 1693. They were allowed to go free if someone would pay for their jail fees. Rev. Parris would not pay for Tituba unless she would confess her sins, which she would not do. She might have ended her days in jail, but the man who had taught her to weave several years earlier in Boston came forward and paid her fees. He also purchased her husband John so they could live together again and work for him as slaves. Tituba and John were very relieved to get out of Salem and they lived a fairly uneventful life thereafter.

Many historians have tried to make sense of the witchcraft hysteria which gripped the village of Salem, Massachusetts. Some say it was a response to the repressiveness of the Puritan religion. Some say the young women pretended to have spells to get some attention or rebel against their parents. Others call it mass hysteria. It's hard to know what caused it, but the human toll was very great. The town was torn apart by neighbor accusing neighbor; many suffered in prison and innocent people were killed.

Discussion Questions

1. What were the differences between Tituba's life in Barbados and her life in Salem? What were the similarities?
2. Why did she move to Salem?
3. How was Tituba different from other people in the village? Why are people often suspicious of those who are different?
4. What might have caused the young girls to accuse the older people of witchcraft? What happened to the town as a result of the witchcraft trials?

Discussion Questions *(continued)*

5. Can you think of examples in recent history of false accusations and mass hysteria? What are some of the safeguards written into our laws today which protect people from being convicted of crimes they did not commit?

6. What can we do to help ourselves and others value rather than fear those who are different?

WEETAMOO:
Seeker of Justice

Weetamoo (1640-1676) was a powerful and high-ranking Native American woman of the Pocasset tribe. She knew that the Native Americans were bound to lose their lands and their traditional way of life if they did not defend themselves against European invasion and colonization. She was among the Indian leaders of the Northeast who urged their people to defend their rights to their land.

When the English colonists first arrived in New England, the Wampanoag tribe, into which Weetamoo later married, made them welcome. They taught the newcomers how to survive in the wilderness and in the harsh New England climate. With the Indians' help, the colony flourished. Soon a friendship treaty was established. The treaty said neither side would hurt the other, and that if either group was attacked, the other would come to its aid. The treaty also said that if it was broken by someone on either side, the offending person would be punished.

A generation later, when Weetamoo was growing up, relations between the colonists and the Indians were already beginning to worsen. The European colonists showed no respect for the Indians' values or traditions. They were always trying to convert the Indians to their religion. As the English settlement claimed more and more of the Native Americans' hunting and farm land, some of them were forced to work for the colonists in their villages. Many of these Indians converted to Christianity. They were called "praying Indians."

Weetamoo felt great sadness for her people and was angry that they were being forced to give up their sacred traditions in order to survive. She distrusted the colonists' system of justice which executed Indians but did not punish colonists for committing the same acts. She was furious about the state of their relationship with the English colonists. The Wampanoag Chief's son, Wamsutta, and his brother Metacom were also outraged at the colonists' many treaty violations.

When she became an adult, Weetamoo married Wamsutta. By the time his father died and Wamsutta himself became chief, the Wampanoags were in a terrible position. The English feared that Wamsutta was conspiring against them and ordered him to come to Plymouth. When he refused, English soldiers were sent to take him by force. On the way to Plymouth, the soldiers said, Wamsutta became ill and died. Weetamoo didn't believe the story. She accused the English of poisoning him and swore revenge.

After Wamsutta's death, Weetamoo went back to her Pocasset village, where she became a strong and respected leader. She remarried and had a child, but later divorced her husband. As the years passed and the English kept taking Indian land, Weetamoo became more convinced that the tribes should defend their land. She held talks with the other leaders in the region to discuss their common problem. Either they would have to leave their home and seek the protection of the neighboring Iroquois Confederacy, giving up their own ancestors' sacred land, or they would have to fight to keep that land. The colonists had many more weapons, and they outnumbered the Indians almost three to one. Finally in 1675, after nine years of secret talks among the tribes, the Indians attacked.

Just before the fighting started, Weetamoo was married again to Quinnapin, a leader of the Narragansett tribe. Their marriage further strengthened the connection among the Pocassets, Narragansetts and Wampanoags. In fact, Weetamoo brought over 300 Narragansett and Pocasset warriors with her to join the Wampanoags in battle. She led them personally, and they fought heroically under her command.

To escape retaliation, Weetamoo and her people were constantly on the move. When the tribes were able to set up camp, they held religious ceremonies and searched for food. The English had burned the Indians' farmlands and storage sheds at the start of the war, creating almost constant hunger. Sickness spread rapidly. Weetamoo's own child was one of those who died.

In December of 1675, the English managed to drive Weetamoo and her people into a swamp and surround them. She and her warriors fought valiantly, but they were severely outnumbered. As the fighting went on, they built rafts for an escape. In the end, however, only 26 of her people, including Weetamoo, survived the battle.

The following August, the English located and surrounded Weetamoo's camp and captured the last of the tribe. When she saw them coming, Weetamoo tried once more to escape on a raft, but this time it broke apart in the middle of the river and she drowned.

Almost half the coastal Indian population of the Massachusetts Bay region had been killed in this one brief, fierce war. The Indians who had been able to evade captivity were outraged about the loss of their homeland. In later wars, these tribes became allies of the French against New England's frontier villages, continuing the fight against further English colonial expansion.

Discussion Questions

1. How did the Indians respond when the colonists first arrived in North America?
2. Why did the relationship between the two cultures change in later years?
3. What was Weetamoo's position concerning Indian land? How did she get more support for her ideas?
4. What strategies did the Indians use in fighting the war against the colonists?
5. What happened to Weetamoo in the end?
6. How would you describe Weetamoo's everyday life and her accomplishments? Does she seem typical of Indian women of her tribe and time period? What did she do that was different? What did she do that was the same?
7. What were some of the reasons for major conflicts between Indians of the Atlantic Coast and the European colonists that settled there? How were they resolved? Knowing what we do today, how would you have resolved these conflicts?

PHILLIS WHEATLEY:
The Mother of Black Literature

Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784) was a Black woman who was brought to this country as a slave when she was only seven or eight years old. Kidnapped from her African village, she was crammed into the stuffy hold of a slave ship. She spent weeks there as it crossed the Atlantic, probably in chains and with little food or water. Many of the people around her died during the crossing.

Phillis ended up in Boston, where she was bought by John Wheatley, a rich merchant tailor, whose wife wanted a young girl who could be trained as her personal servant. The Wheatleys soon recognized Phillis' quick intelligence and her charming nature. These won her a place in the household far above that of the other slaves. Unlike the others, she was given only the lightest chores. She ate with the family and had her own room. In just six months she had not only learned to speak a totally new language, English, but to read and write it, too. Next, she studied Latin and science and then she began writing poetry.

However, this special position in the Wheatley household had disadvantages. While it freed Phillis to develop and refine her creative talent, it also separated her from her own people. Susannah Wheatley made it very clear that "her Phillis" was not to associate on friendly, equal terms with other Black people. Phillis Wheatley was caught between two worlds, one Black, one White. Although she was held superior to other slaves, she herself remained a slave to her masters.

During the late 1760's and early 1770's, most White people believed that Blacks were not very smart. Phillis' obvious intelligence and talents seemed to prove that Blacks would benefit from education. She became quite a celebrity with the Wheatley's visitors and was often the guest of persons of "wealth and distinction." When George Washington was given a poem she had written about him, she was invited to visit him at his headquarters in Cambridge.

In those days, poets usually did not write much about their own personal experiences or opinions. Also, Phillis was so devoutly religious that she probably felt that writing about her faith was more important than writing about personal concerns. Just before the Revolutionary War, Phillis wrote an unusual poem. It said, in part:

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of freedom sprung,
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancied happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
Steeled was that soul and by no misery moved,
That from a father seized his babe beloved:
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

Phillis traveled to England with Nathaniel Wheatley, her owner's son. Her poetry was already known and appreciated there. One of her admirers was the Countess of Huntington, the woman to whom a book of her poems, Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, was to be dedicated. The trip was cut short, however, when Mrs. Wheatley became ill and Phillis had to return home to care for her. Her book was published shortly thereafter and received favorable reviews in England and Scotland. As a result, some people openly criticized the Wheatleys for keeping such a talented poet as a slave. Shortly after her return to Boston she was given her freedom, but she continued to live with the Wheatleys.

When John Wheatley died in 1771, the rest of the family went their separate ways and Phillis supported herself through her literature. She had good business instincts and produced sales of the book herself. Phillis was developing the self-confidence that would lead her to accomplish another remarkable action. In 1774 Phillis wrote a revolutionary letter to Sampson Occom, a Christian missionary. The theme of injustice never made a strong appearance in her poetry, but this letter shows it was never far from her thoughts. She wrote: "In every human breast, God has implented a principle, which we call love of freedom; it is impatient of oppression, and pants for deliverance. I will assert that the same principle lives in us." The letter went on to wish for God's help in bringing about the downfall of those who enslaved the Africans. Phillis' letter against slavery was printed in many New England newspapers.

Four years later, she married John Peters, a well-educated free Black who sometimes practiced law on behalf of slaves in disputes with their owners. Their family lived very well for several years in a fashionable area of Boston. Then they moved to Wilmington, Delaware, with their children, where their finances took a turn for the worse. When they returned to Boston a few years later, it was to a much poorer neighborhood.

Things went from bad to worse for Phillis after that. Two of her three children had died, and John's business troubles landed him in debtor's prison. Phillis found herself alone, with a baby to support. Even though she was far more educated than most White women, she found it hard to get work. Finally she got a job as a servant in a lodging house. However, her health was poor and the work was very strenuous. She became ill and died when she was only 31 years old. Her baby died, too.

Her book of poems was published in the United States in 1786, but did not become popular until years later. In 1834, with the beginning of the organized abolitionist movement, her work became well known in this country. Phillis became a symbol of what Black people could do if they were given a fair chance. Although she was buried in an unmarked grave in Boston, that city now has a monument to Phillis Wheatley, the mother of Black literature in America.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Phillis come to live in Boston?
2. How was her life different from that of other slaves?
3. From Phillis Wheatley's poem and letter, what do you think slavery was really like for her, even though she appears to have been treated better than most slaves of her time?
4. Why did George Washington want to meet her?
5. Why do you think Phillis Wheatley wrote such praises of America when she had been brought here against her will?
6. What happened after she got married?
7. Although Phillis Wheatley's life as a slave was different from most other slaves, as a free Black she faced many of the problems experienced by other free Blacks. From the story, can you figure out what these problems might have been?
8. Why was she considered important after 1834, and what do people say about her today?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Ask the whole class to imagine that they are girls growing up during the time of Abigail Adams. Remind them that books are scarce and there are no public libraries. How will they learn to read and write? What obstacles might be in their way if they are White? What would the obstacles be if they are Black? Have each of the students write and then give a short speech in class telling why they think there should be schools for both boys and girls, White and Black. In their speeches, they should include why being able to attend school is important to them.

2. As a result of European colonists' greed, thousands of Native Americans were forced to relocate and were often placed on designated "reservations." Discuss this situation with your class and demonstrate this displacement by the following activity:

   a. Designate the hall outside your classroom as the Atlantic Ocean. Describe how difficult the crossing was for early colonists. Designate the classroom as continental North America, the "new land."

   b. Go outside with ten students and re-enter the classroom, having just completed a long, long ocean crossing. Since your languages are different, you will need to use sign language or pantomime to ask for land to live on and for growing food.

   c. Ask the students still in the room, representing Native Americans, to give your group the land you need. Draw a line, imaginary or with chalk, around the area given to the new "settlers."

   d. Who's that at the door? More "settlers?" Repeat the process over and over until the students/Native Americans either have little land left or rebel actively.

   e. What? Another boat!

   f. Discuss how it felt and what solutions might have been worked out. Compare this to the actions which resulted in the deaths of millions of Native Americans and thousands of colonists and the establishment of reservations.

3. All work done by women in colonial times was vital for their communities' survival. In White families the mother was responsible for producing most of the goods needed by their families. Many families had female servants or slaves who did many of those jobs. They spun miles of yarn, wove endless yards of cloth, sewed all the family's clothes, made soap and candles, tended small animals, raised gardens, cooked meals and preserved food. All of this was in addition to caring for and educating a large number of children. Women also acted as family physicians and midwives, making medicines from herbs and minerals.

   a. Ask students to write an essay comparing and contrasting the work women did in colonial times with the work women do today. Have them use at least four of the factors listed below to describe how women's work has changed:

      1. Food production, processing and preservation
      2. Making clothes
      3. Use of time then and now
      4. Types of paid employment
      5. Pay compared to male counterparts
      6. Training or years of apprenticeship

   b. Compare the way these tasks were handled in colonial households to the way Indian women organized similar tasks. What were the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems?

4. Ask students to survey their textbooks to discuss the ways that all women are portrayed.

   Directions: Using the table of contents, the index and information in the U.S. history textbook, answer the following questions:

   a. How many pages (or paragraphs) contain information about White women? What kind of information is included?

   b. How many pages (or paragraphs) contain information about Black women, Native American women or women of other minority cultures? What kind of information is included?

   c. How many pictures are there of women compared to those of men? How many of the pictures of women are of women of color?

   d. How many different nations and cultures of Native Americans does the book include?

   e. What does the textbook say about the United States' violations of treaty agreements?

f. What does the textbook say about White, Black, Native American and other minority women who are alive today?

Based on the information gathered, ask the students to make a statement about the overall portrayal of women and minorities in their texts.

5. Many of the Africans who were taken from their homeland and forced into slavery in the "New World" were kidnapped without warning.

   a. Describe how you might feel and react if you were taken from your family, crammed in a boat with dying strangers all around you, and then taken to a place where you couldn't understand the language and customs.

   b. What kinds of things did Blacks in America do to maintain their connection to their homeland and traditional ways of life?

6. When you visit relatives or go away to camp, what do you miss most about being with your family? If you were taken away from your family against your will and knew you might never see them again, what would you miss the most?

7. What strengths did slaves have to survive and be successful in their lives? What strengths do you have that would help you to survive constant and unfair treatment and abuse? How could you use these strengths to make your school or neighborhood a better place?

SOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

General Resources

Black Cargo
Richard Howard
An excellent account of the African slave trade and its impact on colonial America.
Wayland Publishers, 1972
Grades 8-12

Contributions of Black Women to America
Marianna Davis, Editor
Two volumes
Arranged topically, this time period is discussed in sections on education and civil rights (vol II).
Kenday Press, 1982
Grades 9-adult

Domestic Revolutions: A Social History Of American Family Life
Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg
Good sections on White colonial, Black and Indian family life during this period.
The Free Press, 1988
Grades 9-adult

Founding Mothers: Women of America in the Revolutionary Era
Linda Grant DePauw
Separate treatment of the lives of Black, Indian and White colonial women; also rebel and loyalist women's concerns.
Houghton Mifflin Co, 1975
Grades 5-12

History of Women in America
Carol Hymowitz and Michaele Weissman
Several good chapters on White colonial women.
Bantam Books, 1978
Grades 9-adult

The Indian People of Eastern America
James Actell, Editor
A collection of primary source materials with a unique introduction to the Woodland Indians of Northeastern America.
Oxford University Press, 1981
Grades 9-adult

Inventing the American Woman
Glenda Riley
First chapter has good information on Native American and Black women during colonial period.
Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1986
Grades 9-adult

Petticoat Patriots of the American Revolution
Edith Paterson Meyer
White colonial women.
The Vanguard Press, 1976
Grades 8-12

Red, White and Black
Gary Nash
Details the interactions between White, Black and Indian peoples and how they affected each others' cultures and the destiny of the nation.
Prentice Hall, 1982
Grades 10-adult

We, The American Women: A Documentary History
Beth Millstein Kava and Jeanne Bodin
Newspaper clippings, legal documents, original source narratives, etc.
Provides a real flavor of the period for White and Black women.
Science Research Associates, 1983
Grades 8-adult

Women and the American Experience
Nancy Woloch
First chapter is on Native American women and the interactions and conflict between Indians and colonists.
Good information on White colonists; short section on Black women as slaves and servants.
Alfred A. Knopf, 1984
Grades 9-adult

Curriculum Materials

An Economic Necessity: Women in Colonial America and **Republican Mothers: Women in the Revolution**
J. Diane Cirksena, Project Director
Narrative overview and individual biographies of White, Black and Indian women. Excellent curriculum materials on this time period.
Women in American Culture
1400 S. Division
Northfield, MN 55057.
Grades 6-9

A Handbook of Women in American History: "Remember the Ladies"
Robin Franklin and Tasha Lebow Wolf
Overview of American minority women in history. Contains primary source materials and can be used as a companion to textbooks.
Center for Sex Equity in Schools, 1987
1046 School of Education
University Of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Grades 8-adult

Legacies: A History of Women and the Family in America, 1607-1870
Elizabeth Pleck and Ellen Rothman
Audio tapes and book, engaging narratives and vignettes of everyday life for White, Black and Indian families.
The Annenberg/CPB Project, 1987
This is available through
Women's History Resources
National Women's History Project
P.O. Box 3716
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-3716
Grades 9-adult

Women in the Colonial Era and the Early American Republic
Beverly Sanders
Narrative stories of Native, Black, and White women. Part of a larger series, Women In American History.
WEEA Publishing Center, 1979
55 Chapel St.
Newton, MA 02160
Grades 8-12

Reference Books

Famous American Women: A Biographical Dictionary from Colonial Times to the Present
Robert McHenry
Short biographies of important women in American history.
Dover Publications, 1980
Grades 9-adult

Herway: Biographies of Women for Young People
Mary-Ellen Fulkin
Excellent short biographies with annotated references to longer works. References are somewhat outdated.
American Library Association, 1976
Grades 4-12

Notable American Women Vols. I-III
Edward T. and Janet Wilson James, Editors
Detailed biographies, limited multicultural representation.
Harvard University Press, 1971
Grades 7-adult

Sources for Individual Biographies

ABIGAIL ADAMS
Notable American Women
Famous American Women
Herway
Republican Mothers: Women in the Revolution
Abigail Adams
Regina Z. Kelly
Houghton Mifflin, 1962
Grades 4-7

MARY BRANT
Notable American Women
Famous American Women
Great North American Indians
Frederick Dockstader,
Reinhold Publishers, 1977
Readers Encyclopedia of the American West
Crowell Publishers, 1977

ELIZABETH FREEMAN
Herway
Mumbet: The Story of Elizabeth Freeman
Harold W. Felton
Dodd Mead, 1970

MARY KATHERINE GODDARD
Notable American Women
Famous American Women
Herway
National Geographic, "Patriots in Petticoats"
October 1975
Mary Kate's War (film)
National Geographic, 1975
Grades 8-12

ANNE HUTCHINSON
Notable American Women
Famous American Women
Herway
Inventing the American Woman
An Economic Necessity: Women in Colonial America
Colony Leader: Anne Hutchinson
Doris Faber
Garrard, 1970
Grades 3-6

MARY JEMISON
Notable American Women
Dictionary of American Biography
Famous American Women
Herway
A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison
Legacies: History of Women and the Family in America
Indian Captive: The Story of Mary Jemison
Lois Lenski
Lippincott, 1941
Grades 7-9
Mary Jemison: Seneca Captive
Jeanne Gardner
Harcourt, 1966
Grades 5-7

ELIZA PINCKNEY
Notable American Women
Herway
Women and the American Experience
An Economic Necessity: Women in Colonial America

TITUBA
Herway
Tituba of Salem Village
Ann Petry
Harper & Row, 1964
Grades 7-10
The Crucible (play)
Arthur Miller
Double Day

WEETAMOO
Great North American Indians
Frederick Dockstader,
Reinhold Publishers, 1977
American Indian Women
Women and the American Experience

PHILLIS WHEATLEY
Notable American Women
Famous American Women
Herway
National Geographic, "Patriots in Petticoats"
October 1975
Phillis Wheatley
Merle Richmond
Chelsea House, 1988
Grades 7-10

NOTES